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old Pagan England. Here a man must begin by *being* a great man, if he wishes to become one; and as so many great philosophers, poets, and the like, have been so infinitely small men, they all fall out with democracy, simply because democracy shows up their false pretences, and reduces them to their human level.

Ralph Waldo, Emerson had a glorious opportunity of writing a noble book, a book encouraging to those large classes of our fellowmen, whom our institutions endeavor to lift up; a book rebuking those powerful classes of our fellowmen, who, especially in England, always labor to keep the masses down. Such a book Europe would have respected—an American would have loved it.

Such a book Mr. Emerson has not written. Perhaps he could not. Perhaps he would not. Mr. Emerson has made most fascinating intellectual, and metaphysical capital out of "English Traits," and written a delightful book on this subject. But we have said sufficient to express our great admiration for it. We have also said sufficient to express our aversion for its sins of omission. And, in conclusion, we can only express our fond hope, that the man whose destiny it may be to write a book on "American Traits," will prove less recreant to the promptings of Humanity than Mr. Emerson, in his "English Traits."

## THE

## MASTER-WORKERS IN MOSAIC.

(Translated for THE CRAYON from the French of Madame Dudevant.)

## XXII.

THIS relapse affected Valerio so deeply, that he almost resolved to abandon his work, and retire from the competition. Francesco's condition was a serious one, and the anxiety of mind which he felt at the sight of his chief work just commenced, and so interrupted, increased to a still greater extent his physical suffering. This suffering was aggravated when Ceccato's wife came to him, and said, thoughtlessly, that she had observed Bozza going into the studio of the Bianchini; this evidence of ingratitude affected Francesco so, that he wept with indignation, and he experienced another attack of fever. Valerio, seeing him so tormented, pretended that Nina was mistaken, and that he would himself ascertain the truth about it. He could scarcely believe in such insensibility on the part of a man with whom, notwithstanding many causes of complaint, he had shared his last morsel. He proceeded to San-Fantino, where the Bianchini's studio was located; and, through the half-opened door, he saw Bozza, truly enough, engaged in directing the young Antonio. He caused him to be summoned, and having led him some distance away, he warmly reproached him for his conduct.

"When I saw you depart so hastily the other day," said he to him, "I well understood that, at the first hope of personal success, your old friends would become as strangers to you. In that I recognized the egotism of the artist, and my brother sought to excuse it, by saying that a thirst for glory is one of those imperious passions, before which everything is prostrated; but, between egotism and inalice,

between ingratitude and perfidy, there is a definite mark over which I could not believe you would bound so lightly. Thanks, Bartolomeo, you have given me a profound lesson, and you have caused me to doubt the sacred influence of a generous action."

"Speak not of generous actions, messer," replied Bozza, coldly. "I have acknowledged none. You assisted me in the hope of my being useful to you; and I have paid you for your services by a present, the value of which greatly surpasses the expenses you have incurred on my account."

Thus speaking, Bozza both looked and pointed at the chain which Valerio wore around his neck. Scarcely had he comprehended what Bozza said, when Valerio tore it off so violently, as to break it in several pieces.

"Is it possible," cried he, repressing tears of mingled shame and anger; "that you had the audacity to send me a present?"

"It is a daily occurrence," replied Bozza; "I do not deny the civility you have shown in receiving me, and I thank you for having known me well enough not to be concerned for the advances you have made in providing for my nourishment."

"Thus,"—said Valerio, extending the chain in his trembling hand, and fixing upon Bozza eyes glowing with rage; "you took my studio for a pawnbroker's shop, and you thought that I kept open table for speculation? It is thus you appreciate my sacrifices and my devotion to my unfortunate brethren! When, so as to give you time to work—I myself—prepared your meal;—you took me for your cook!"

"I had no such thoughts," coldly replied Bozza. "I thought that you were desirous of attaching to yourself an artist whom you judged to possess some talent, and in order to free myself from obligation, I sent you a gift. Is not that customary?"

At these words, Valerio, exasperated, cast the chain violently in his face. Bozza was struck under the eye, and the blood flowed.

"You shall answer me for that insult," said he, calmly: "if I restrain myself now, it is because one word from me would plant ten poniards at your throat. I trust that we shall meet again."

"Do not doubt of it," replied Valerio; and they separated.

Upon returning home Valerio encountered Tintoret, and related to him what had just occurred: he also made him acquainted with Francesco's relapse. The master was sincerely grieved; but noticing that discouragement was gaining ground upon Valerio, he was careful not to utter vulgar consolations which, in such ardent temperaments, only add to a grievance. On the contrary, he affected to share his doubts about the future, and to regard Bozza as very capable of surpassing him at the competition, and so inauaging the school of the Bianchini, as to bear away the palm from that of the Zuccati.

"This is indeed sad to think of," added he. "These are men who, in fact, know nothing about Art; but, thanks to a young man, who knew about as much, only a little while ago,—thanks to the perseverance and boldness, which often usurp the place of genius, the best talents, perhaps, are going to fall back into obscurity, while ignorance, or at least bad taste, is going to

assume the sceptre. Adieu to Art! behold the days of its decline at hand!"

"The evil is not, perhaps, inevitable, my dear master!" cried Valerio, revived by this feigned depression. "God be praised! the trial is not yet come, and Bozza has not yet produced his masterpiece."

"I will not conceal from you," said Tintoret, "that his beginning is very fine. I glanced at it yesterday in passing by San-Fantino, and I was greatly surprised,—for I did not believe Bozza capable of such a design. His pupil, young Antonio, is full of talent; and, besides that, Bartolomeo retouches his efforts so carefully, he will leave no room for improvement. He also directs the other two, and the Bianchini are such servile copyists, that with a good master, they are capable of drawing well by the instinct of imitation, without comprehending the design."

"But, master," said Valerio, anxiously, "you would not give the prize to such charlatans, to the detriment of the true servants of Art? Neither would Messer Tiziano."

"My son, in this contest we are not called upon to judge men but works; and for better security, it is probable that names will be entirely withheld. Thou knowest that the custom is to judge without seeing the signature of a work, and, to prevent it, a strip of paper is placed over the name before the picture is presented to us. This custom is a symbol of the impartiality which should control our judgments. If Bozza surpasses thee, my heart will bleed; but my mouth shall utter the truth. If the Bianchini triumph, I shall think truly that imposition is victorious over fidelity, and vice over virtue; but I am not an Inquisitor, and I have only to judge whether the compartments of enamel are more or less well arranged in a frame."

"I am well aware of it, master," resumed Valerio, somewhat piqued; "but why do you think that the school of the Zuccati will not force you to award the palm to them? Such is their intention. Who demands an unrighteous verdict? We do not wish for it, supposing that we could obtain it of you."

"Thou appearest to me so much discouraged, my poor Valerio, and thou hast so great a work to accomplish, that unless thy brother's health be immediately re-established, I am much concerned for thee in the position in which thou findest thyself. Besides, with Francesco ill, can your school exist? Thou art an able master; thou art gifted with wonderful facility, and inspiration seems to descend upon thee; but thou hast always turned thy back to glory? Art thou not insensible to the applause of the people? Dost thou not prefer the seductions of pleasure or the *dolce far niente* to titles, wealth, and honors? Thou art a man admirably endowed, my young master; thy intelligence might triumph over all things; but it must not be concealed from thee that thou art not an artist. The struggle repels thee,—thou despisest the prize,—thou art too disinterested to enter into the arena. Bozza, with the hundredth part of thy genius, will yet accomplish everything through ambition, perseverance, and by the hardness of his heart."

"Master, perhaps you are right," said

Valerio, who had listened to this discourse with an abstracted air. "I thank you for having expressed your fears; they are the result of an earnest solicitude for your young friend, and I find them too well founded. Nevertheless, master, we shall see. Adieu!"

Thus speaking, Valerio kissed the hand of the illustrious master, according to a custom of the time, and, with a light step, crossed the Rialto.

## XXIII.

VALETERIO upset everything on returning to his studio. He strode about impetuously, spoke loudly, hummed the air of a drinking song with a gloomy brow, said harsh things in a tender manner, broke his tools, rallied his pupils; and, approaching his brother's bedside, embraced him passionately, telling him with an air half crazy, half inspired:—"There, be easy, Checo, thou wilt recover, thou shalt win the great prize, we will produce a *chef d'œuvre* at the competition. Come, come! nothing is lost,—the muse has not yet flown back to her native heaven!"

Francesco regarded him with a look of astonishment.

"What is the matter with thee?" said he to him; "thou art beside thyself. What has happened,—hast thou quarrelled with any one? hast thou encountered the Bianchini?"

"Explain thyself, master; tell us what has passed," added Marini. "If I may believe a few odd words I heard this morning, in spite of myself, Bozza's picture is already far advanced, and they say it will be a *chef d'œuvre*; that is what has tormented thee, master; but take courage: our efforts—"

"Tormented! I!" cried Valerio; "and how long since is it that I have allowed myself to be tormented by the success of one of my pupils? And at what moment in my life have you seen me afflicted by, or uneasy at, the triumphs of an artist? Really!—I envious!—me!—eh?"

"Wherefore this sensitiveness, my good master," said Ceccato. "Who amongst us ever had such a thought? But tell us, we entreat thee, if it be true that Bozza has designed an admirable composition?"

"Undoubtedly!" replied Valerio, smiling, and assuming at once his usual gaiety and good temper; and why not, for he is capable—I have taught him principles for that. Well! what ails you all? why such a sorrowful look? One would think you were as many willows drooping over a dried-up cistern. Come! let us see. Has Nina forgotten the dinner? has the procurator-treasurer commissioned us for another barbarism? Arouse, then, comrades! to work; there is not a day to be lost—not even an hour. Come, come, tools! enamel! boxes! and let every one surpass himself, for Bozza is doing great things; and it is our care to do still greater!"

From this moment, joy and activity reigned within the little studio of San Filippo. Francesco seemed to return to life as he noticed the gleam of hope in the eyes of his friends—that ray of sacred joy which formerly inspired the masterpieces of the cupola of Saint Mark. For a moment, doubt had rested upon the hearts of

these young people, like an arch of lead upon laughing caryatides; but Valerio chased it away with good humor. The intense energy of his will was concentrated within himself, and he only manifested it by an excess of gaiety. But an important revolution had taken place in Valerio, and he was no longer the same man. If he was not consumed by vanity, if he had not become one of those jealous spirits, unable to tolerate the glory or success of another, he had, at least, devoted himself religiously to his profession; his character had become earnest under the mask of gaiety. Misfortune had rudely attacked him in the most sensitive part of his soul, by striking the beings he most loved, and by demonstrating to him, through hard lessons, the superior advantage of patience and judgment. He had just learned the state of the poverty in which Francesco found himself the day after the trial, notwithstanding his former economy and regular habits. Upon discovering in his brother's casket the acquittances of his own creditors, Valerio wept like the prodigal son. Great souls have often great weaknesses, but they root them out; and it is that by which they are distinguished from the common crowd. After that day Valerio, although in the enjoyment of the good gifts of fortune, never departed from the rules of moderation and simplicity which he secretly imposed upon himself in his own heart. He never mentioned this resolution to any one; but he testified his gratitude to Francesco by the devotion of his whole life and his firmness of soul, by a morality proof against every temptation.

Serene joy, cheerful labor, songs and laughter, re-awoke the sleeping echoes of this little chamber. The winter was severe, but wood was not wanting, and each one had a handsome robe of cloth trimmed with fur, and a warm doublet of velvet. Francesco was restored, as if by miracle. Nina recovered her freshness and gracefulness, and became pregnant with another child, the expectation of which consoled her for the loss of her first born. The child that had survived the pestilence grew visibly from day to day, and the little Maria Robusti, his godmother, came frequently to amuse him in the studio of the Zuccati. This charming young girl took a lively interest in the works of her youthful friend, and was already capable of appreciating their merits.

The great day at last arrived, and all the pictures were exhibited in the sacristy of Saint Mark, where the commission was assembled. Sansovino had been added to the masters previously appointed.

Valerio had done his utmost, and a lively hope filled his breast. He came to the competition with that noble confidence which does not exclude modesty. He loved art for itself, and he was happy in having succeeded in rendering his thought; the injustice of men could not deprive him of this innocent satisfaction. His brother was evidently agitated, but with no appearance of false shame, hatred, or jealousy. His fine, pale countenance, his delicate, trembling lips, his look at once timid and confident, produced a deep interest for him in the minds of the masters of the commission. All were desirous of awarding him the prize;—but their attention was diverted by a man of a worn

aspect and trembling deportment; so convulsively bent as he tendered his half-deprecatory, half-insolent salutations, that they were almost startled as if a lunatic had entered their presence. Bozza, however, soon recovered an appearance of *sang-froid* and a suitable manner, but he felt every moment ready to swoon.

The mosaists waited in an adjoining apartment, whilst the painters proceeded to the examination of their works. At the expiration of an hour, which seemed a century to Bozza, they were summoned, and Tintoret stepping forward to meet them, begged them to seat themselves in silence. His rigid face expressed to none, what each was anxious to discover there. Silence was not a difficult matter. All felt oppressed, and breathed quickly, each with his heart in his throat. When they were seated in the places appointed for them, Titian, as senior, placed himself near the pictures, arranged upon the wall, and pronounced in a clear, firm voice, the following formula—

"We, Vecelli, surnamed Titian, Jacopo Robusti, surnamed Tintoret, Jacopo Sansovino, Jacopo Pistoja, Andrea Schiavone, Paolo Cagliari, surnamed Veronese, all masters in painting, acknowledged by the senate and by the honorable and fraternal corporation of painters, commissioned by the glorious Republic of Venice, and nominated by the venerable Council of Ten to the functions of judges of the works presented at this competition, with the aid of God, the lamp of Truth, and purity of heart, have attentively examined, conscientiously and impartially, the said works, and have unanimously declared as alone worthy of being promoted to the first mastership and direction of the other masters hereinafter named, the author of the picture upon which we have inscribed No. 1, with the seal of the commission. This picture, the author of which is unknown to us, faithful as we are to the oath we have taken, not to read the signatures before having pronounced upon the merit of the works, will now be exposed to your regard and to ours."

At the same moment, Tintoret raised one of the veils which covered the picture, and removed the band which concealed the signature. A cry of joy escaped from Francesco. The successful picture was that of his brother, Valerio. The latter who had never calculated for more than the second prize, even in his fondest hope, remained motionless, and only gave himself up to his own delight upon seeing the transport of Francesco.

The second picture crowned was that of Francesco, the third, Bozza's. But Tintoret, who pitied his anguish and supposing he could excite great joy in him, turned towards him, believing he, like the others, would raise and uncover himself; but he was obliged to call his name three times. Bozza remained motionless, his arms crossed upon his breast, his back against the wall and head sunk upon his bosom. A prize of the third order was too greatly beneath his ambition. His teeth were set and his knees so contracted that they were almost forced to carry him off after the assembly broke up.

The last prizes fell to Ceccato, to Gian-Antonio Bianchini and Marini. The two other Bianchini were defeated. But the government gave them work at a later day,

when it was ascertained that the number of mosaic masters was too limited. Their task, however, was assigned to them in localities where they could no longer be in contact with, nor rivals of the Zuccati, and their hatred for ever after became completely impotent.

## XXIV.

BEFORE separating, Titian exhorted the young laureates not to fancy they had arrived at perfection, but to study yet for a long time the works of the old masters and the cartoons of painters. "It is in vain," said he, to them, "that the vulgar bow down at the sight of brilliant particles joined neatly together in the semblance of some gross form to be worshipped; it is in vain that prejudiced persons deny that mosaic work can compare with the beauty of drawing in fresco painting: let those among you who feel deeply by what process they have secured our suffrage and surpassed their competitors, persevere in the love of truth and faithfully adhere to the study of nature; let those who have committed errors by working without rules and without conviction, profit by their defeat and give themselves sincerely to study. It is never too late to abjure a false system and make up for lost time."

He entered into a detailed examination of all the works exposed at the competition, and pointed out their beauties and defects. He dwelt particularly upon the faults after having bestowed great praise upon the excellences of Bozza's work. He objected to the face of Saint Jerome on account of its ungraceful line, giving a certain expression of hardness, which belong less to a saint than to a pagan warrior; also to a conventional system of lifeless coloring, and a cold, almost contemptuous expression.

"It is a good figure," said he, "but it is not Saint Jerome."

Titian also spoke of the Bianchini, and tried to mollify the bitterness of their defeat, by praising their productions in a certain point of view. As it was his custom always to mix more honey than wormwood in his discourse, after having approved of the major part of their works, he attempted also to praise the drawing; but in the midst of a somewhat forced phrase, Tintoret interrupted him, pronouncing these words, still preserved in the *procès-verbal*:

"I have given no judgment upon these figures, nor upon their merits; because I have not been ordered so to do."

At the termination of this memorable sitting, Titian gave a grand dinner to all the painters of the commission and to the successful mosaists. Little Maria Robusti appeared there dressed as a sybil, and Titian that evening, sketched from her a design for the head of the infant Virgin, for a picture which is still to be seen in the museum at Venice. Bozza did not make his appearance.

The repast was magnificent. The health of the laureates was joyously drunk. Titian observed with astonishment, the grace and manners of Francesco. He could not comprehend the total absence of jealousy, as well as such tender and devoted fraternal love in an artist. He knew, however, that Francesco did not lack ambition; but Francesco's heart was still greater than his

genius. Valerio was transported at the sight of his brother's joy. Occasionally he was so overcome by it, as to become a little saddened. At dessert, Maria Robusti proposed the health of Titian, and immediately after, Francesco rising, cup in hand, said with a radiant brow—"I drink to my master, Valerio Zuccato." The two brothers threw themselves into each other's arms, and burst into tears. The good priest, Alberto, became, it is said, a little more than reasonably excited merely by taking a few drops of Grecian wine, which the convivialists swallowed by cupsfull. He was so simple and naïve, that all his intoxication wasted itself in an expression of friendship and admiration. Old Zuccato came in at the end of the dinner. He was in a bad humor. "A thousand thanks, master," replied he to Titian, who offered him a cup, "how do you expect me to drink on such a day as this?"

"Is it not the happiest day of your life, my old friend?" replied Titian, "and is not that reason enough for emptying a flagon of Samos with your old companions?"

"No, master," replied the old man, "this day is not a happy one for me. It binds my sons forever to an ignoble profession, and condemns two talents of the first order to unworthy labors. Many thanks! I do not see a cause for drinking."

He allowed himself, nevertheless, to be somewhat mollified, when his two sons proposed his health. Then little Maria came to play with the silver locks of his beard, intreating for what she termed her husband's pardon.

"Eh, indeed!" said Zuccato, "does that pleasantry still continue, my sweet child?"

"So steadily, that I am desirous of giving you a wedding banquet as soon as possible," said Tintoret, smiling.

History does not say if this repast took place, nor if Valerio Zuccato espoused Maria Robusti. It is, nevertheless, to be believed that they remained intimately associated, and that the two families never formed but one. Francesco wished in vain to abdicate his authority in favor of his brother's rights, but he was compelled by the perseverance of the latter to resume his rôle of chief master, so that the title of Valerio remained purely honorary.

The school of the Zuccati became again celebrated and successful. No change was apparent there, except that Valerio lived a regular life and Gian-Antonio Bianchini, overpowered by good example, and won by good treatment, became an estimable artist through his talents as well as good conduct. Happy days were bounded by this new horizon, and the Zuccato produced new master-pieces, the detail of which would be too long to particularize.

The foregoing tale is related by one of a company of friends, assembled together in a summer-house in the city of Venice.

HERE finished the narrative of the abbé. Inquiries were made respecting the after life of Bozza for, notwithstanding the weakness of this artist, his many sufferings interested us.

"Bozza," resumed the abbé, "could not endure the idea of working under the orders of the Zuccati. The dread of again being compelled to accept their favors, after all his past errors, was more frightful

to him than the severest punishment. He wandered from city to city, sometimes working at Bologna, sometimes at Padua, living upon little and earning still less. Notwithstanding his great talents and his diploma, his haughty manners and sombre air inspired distrust. He was but little affected by the sufferings of want, but the absence of notoriety was the torment of his life. He returned to Venice at the end of a few years, when the Zuccati obtained for him a mastership and occupation. The times had changed; the government had become less strict in its development of reforms. Bozza could work, but it appears that Tintoret would never forgive him his past conduct in relation to the Zuccati. The rigid old veteran, compelled to furnish cartoons, made him wait so long that in a letter of Bozza's still extant, he complains of being reduced to want by the interminable delays of that master. The Zuccati had no cause for similar complaints, for they were able to design their own subjects, and besides, were loved and esteemed by all the masters. They carried the art of mosaic to a degree of perfection, which has never been equalled. Bozza has left beautiful works, but he could never overcome his defects, because his soul was incomplete.

Marini and Ceccato appear to have survived the Zuccati; and to have succeeded them in the first ranks of the master-workers of mosaic.

"And now, my friends," added the abbé, "if you examine those magnificent ceilings of mosaic, produced in the great era of Venetian painting, and if you recall what I showed you the other day at Torcello, the fragments of ancient Byzantine work, you will see that the destinies of this wholly oriental art, were allied to those of painting up to the epoch of the Zuccati; but that later, given up to itself, mosaic art degenerated and ended by being entirely lost. Florence seems to have hold of the art, but she has reduced it to mere decoration. The new chapel of the Medici is remarkable for the richness of the materials employed upon it:—lapis-lazuli veined with gold—the most precious marble, amberggris, coral, alabaster, and malachite, all displayed in arabesque and ornaments of refined taste. But our own ancient pictures of ineffaceable color, our brilliant enamels so ingeniously obtained, of every desirable shape, at the Murano manufactory; our illustrious mosaic-masters, and our rich corporations and our joyous brotherhoods, all these exist no longer, to impress by monuments, by ruins or by souvenirs the splendor of a period which exists no more."

*Note.*—The translation of this tale was far advanced, before it was discovered that an English authoress, Miss Matilda M. Hays, had made a translation some years since, and published it in a collection of the works of the author in London. That version was obtained and it has proved of service, but the present translation is entirely new, and in many respects different from the one referred to. The translator deems it his duty to make this statement, as the possession of Miss Hays' translation has rendered the labor easier.

"I am connoisseur enough to know that the first impression of a picture is seldom aided by words, especially those of a fond collector."—*Monaldi*.